

GEN. LOGAN'S MILITARY BILL.

To the Editor of the Evening Telegraph:— It was once wittily said in jest, "Give me the luxuries and I will dispense with the necessities of life," but in sober, serious earnest, some members of Congress say, "Give us conclusions and we can dispense with facts"—at least they act in conformity with such views.

How safe the generality of retrenchment and reform, the halloo of demagogues, that sends in full cry the pack of fools! The wise are in favor of both; retrenchment sometimes, reform always—seeing that in human concerns there is always need of it. But what retrenchment and reform? Ah, there the question narrows amazingly. We look askance, for instance, upon retrenchment and reform which seem to court the light of day, and the foundation of which, nevertheless, contains misstatement, suppression, and garbling of the truth. We are not satisfied with conclusions founded upon airy nothing, we believe in the utility of the stubbornness of facts; and therefore we cannot mutely rest contented with the hue and cry of retrenchment and reform, when a question so momentous as the honor of the nation is at stake.

The question is not the broad one whether or not retrenchment and reform are necessary, but whether the retrenchment and reform represented by General Logan's bill are just retrenchment and reform. If not, then if the nation tends to dishonor itself, and needs no other cry than "let us look to our purse," we say, look to your honor for the sake of your purse, for they are inseparably connected. If the military and naval service be made to feel that, in time of war, the future offers them labor, wounds, glory, and rank, and, in time of peace, deprivation of that of which they can be shorn, farewell both army and navy! Who would seek either service? or if there be some base, what sort of a service would it then be? The tenure of rewards and honors in a profession whose members brave death to secure them cannot in the nature of things be less than during life. If we try to make it otherwise, the profession of arms must, as an honorable one, cease to exist, and become the trade of *condottiere*.

Where did General Logan, contrasting the French army with ours, learn that its staff is relatively and absolutely smaller than ours? He surely did not mean to quibble—our staff, so-called, comprising officers of several departments unknown to the organization of that of the French. He could not have met with the statement in official documents, for it is not to be found there. Then he must have got it by hearsay or by intuition. At any rate, and for the reason that, although the word staff does in this country correspond to the phrase *etat-major* (staff), in France, the things are different, General Logan's statement is incorrect. Again, General Logan made the statement that six hundred and sixty-three staff officers who in 1860 were mostly lieutenants and captains are now all majors, lieutenant-colonels, colonels, and brigadier-generals. Here occur two errors of fact. In the first place, the officers referred to are, according to the *Army Register*, six hundred and nineteen in number, not six hundred and sixty-three; and, in the second place, three hundred and thirty-five, or more than a half of them, are, according to the *Army Register*, below the rank of major.

We care comparatively little whether General Sherman's salary is or is not too high for his position and deserts, but it does nearly concern all the nation that if it be reduced it be not on false pretences. Yet General Logan, speaking in advocacy of its reduction, mentioned that the Chief Justice of the United States receives only \$6500 per annum, and failed to remind his hearers that a bill pending before Congress gave the Chief Justice \$12,000 per annum, and full pay to the Chief and Associate Justices whenever they retire.

In the comparison by General Logan of the military establishment of this country with that of France and of Russia, he failed to mention that the area of this country is over fourteen times as great as that of France; and that Russia, although she has an area even greater than ours, is not obliged to garrison petty posts over a vast extent of frontier. As for France, although possessing two frontiers, she has but one of limited extent to guard, and her stationing of troops is prescribed purely by convenience of quartering. General Logan did not mention the great difference in the labor involved in supplying an army stationed over a large area, compared with the labor of supplying one stationed over a small area. He did not mention, and, being chairman of the Military Committee of the House, he could hardly have been unaware of the fact, that, so heavy at present are, and for a long time have been, the duties of the Corps of Engineers, it is obliged to employ ninety civil engineers.

Much more might be said of the spirit with which this important subject has been considered and presented to Congress and the people. Mr. Platt considerably moved to strike out the fourth section of the bill to reduce the major-generals to three, because he did not wish to throw upon the President the disagreeable duty of designating who should be mustered out. Surely, if it is right to reduce the number of major-generals, the disagreeableness of the President's part in the duty should not stand in the way of its performance.

Not alone by lavish praise and reward of men who distinguish themselves in the field are high morale and efficiency in armies maintained. The real soldier, although the emanation of war, is the creation of peace. Better by far let our war material rust and rot away than tamper with the spirit of our army. "Il ne faut pas brutaliser la machine." To be just, change in the army should be prospective. It should not affect those who have so fairly won their emoluments and their honors. Let it not be said that what the nation conferred it withdrew. The faith of a nation is tacitly pledged to its

military and naval officers, whose very education has unfitted them for other careers. Nothing but poverty can justify it in dismissing them from its service, and nothing under heaven, in degrading them.

Bryn Mahr.

Correspondence of The Evening Telegraph. This new town on the Pennsylvania Railroad, north of Whitehall station, is beginning to show vigorous signs of improvement. That portion of the railroad extending from Athensville to Rosemont, designed to avoid the sharp curve at Whitehall, has been graded, the bridges completed, and the contractors have commenced laying the track preparatory to the completion of the work in early summer. Several fine avenues have been laid out and graded in Bryn Mahr, and two elegant double houses are nearly ready for occupancy. During this spring and summer a number of magnificent residences will be built, and the place otherwise improved, in anticipation of making it one of the most attractive places in the vicinity of Philadelphia. It is sufficient to say that this is a Pennsylvania Railroad enterprise, and will become deservedly popular, as we understand the company design to offer greater facilities to their local travel this summer than during any former period. It is rumored that trains will run nearly every hour in the day. Should such be the case, this section will become as populous as Germantown in a very few years, and far more desirable for residences.

Other magnificent improvements are going forward in the same neighborhood by Mr. Charles Wheeler, Mr. John M. Kennedy, and Mr. Isaac H. Evans. The two former are private residences, and the latter a private boarding-house. Mr. Evans has located his house on the Lancaster pike, within three or four minutes walk of the present Whitehall station and about the same distance from the contemplated station at Bryn Mahr, so that his guests will have it very convenient going to and from the house to the trains. The new house built by Isaac N. Flounders, of Media, has been named "Summit Grove," from two facts—the first that it occupies the highest ground in the neighborhood, and the second that it is located in a beautiful grove. The house is 80 feet front by 40 feet in depth, with a wing 28 by 33 feet. It is three stories high, and presents a commanding aspect, from every point, for miles round. Surrounding "Summit Grove" is a piazza 260 feet long and 10 feet wide. The first floor is divided into a parlor 40 by 23 feet; a reception-room and office, each 18 by 20 feet; a dining hall 40 by 27 feet; kitchen, 18 by 23 feet, and large laundry and wash-rooms. The main hall is 9 feet wide, and the hall extending from the dining room to the parlor, between the office and reception-room, 6 feet wide. Between the dining-room and kitchen there are two pantries, each 12 feet square, with 4 feet entry between. The ceilings are 11 feet high. The second floor is divided into 22 rooms, averaging 12 by 16 feet—sixteen of which are arranged in sets with communicating doors between each two.

They are all admirably ventilated with large transoms and windows. The hall extending through the main building is six feet wide, and that through the wing four feet. On this floor are two large bath-rooms, containing all the modern conveniences, including an abundant supply of hot and cold water. The third story contains thirteen rooms similar in size to those on the second floor. The second story is ten feet in the clear, and the third nine feet. Each room will contain gas, and a register for heating when required. The "Summit Grove" furnishes a magnificent view of the Delaware river for several miles, and vessels can be seen quite plainly. Germantown, Chestnut Hill, Conshohocken, Villa Nova College, and many other points of interest and beauty are readily discernible. Mr. Evans has wisely selected his location and constructed a house for comfort, convenience, and luxury. It is the best arranged house for the purpose in the vicinity of this great city, and cannot fail to become popular, if he supplies his table as bountifully as was his invariable custom at Brookfield last summer. In the splendid lawn surrounding the house is an ice-house 20 feet square and deep, well filled with clear, crystal ice, and an extensive livery stable is to be built before the season opens on the first of June. This section of country is well supplied with churches. Within a mile and a half of "Summit Grove" the Presbyterians, Friends, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, and Catholics have commodious churches. We predict a large population in Bryn Mahr in a very few years. Passing through the place yesterday, we were surprised to find that so large a number of lots has been secured by many of our well-known citizens, who design improving them during this year.

Physical Changes in the Great American Desert. The *Inland Empire* has the following statement concerning the process of change going on all over the great inland desert between California and Missouri:— For some time past there has been a question before the people of this basin and of the plains east of the Rocky Mountains that has as yet failed to be satisfactorily answered. It is: Why are the streams carrying more water than in former years? The great plains are fast losing their arid nature, and through them are running streams in places where twenty years ago there was not a drop of water; and where at that time there were small streams, they are now very much enlarged. In many cases, this change has been of great value, as it has given to the traveller a supply of water that had previously been denied. When the first emigrants crossed the Plains to California, the great objection urged to the trip was the scarcity of water on the great part of the route. Within a few years this has been all changed, and in the beds of old streams that were dry when first found, there is now water for all the purposes required. The Laramie Plains are not now destitute of water, whereas some years ago there was none, and the traveller had to carry water on passing over them. There can be no doubt that, for the last ten years, there has been a

continued increase of water throughout the whole desert country, between the Missouri and the Sierra Nevada. The Arkansas was dry in 1862, from the Pawnee Fork to the Cimarron crossing, and previous to that time the Pecos was dried up, so that at many places the people were obliged to dig for water. And the Moro valley and plains were at that time almost destitute of vegetation. Now the vegetation is luxuriant, and it is one of the very best wheat-growing sections.

Denver was built on the banks of an extinct creek, which it was supposed would remain dry, but, after the settlement, to the astonishment of the people, it became quite a stream, and is now crossed by bridges. The Huerfano, the Roys Pecos, and others that were dry during the summer months, ten years ago, are now constantly running in fair streams. We are satisfied that along the whole line of the Union Pacific Railroad there is much more moisture in the earth than there was only a few years since. Again, Salt Lake is seven feet higher than it was ten years ago, and it is constantly rising, and it has been urged by those who have paid attention to the subject, that the rise of water there would produce a solution of the Mormon question before Congress would act upon it. When the Salt Lake shall rise a few feet higher we shall look for its overthrow to reach the Shell Creek range, as evidently at one time water did cover what is now only an arid valley, not direct in its course, but cut up with ranges, still the continued valley can be traced. This great increase of water will work a great revolution in the opinion of the people as to the capacity of the great plains for agricultural purposes.

The only reason why the great plains cannot be made into good fruit farms is the lack of water and timber, as the land in richness has no superior. The increase of water of which we have spoken will do away with one objection, and the discovery of coal over a distance east of Salt Lake for over six hundred miles will obviate the other. The man who travels over the Union Pacific Railroad twenty-five years from this time will find that the sage brush has given way to crops of all kinds growing in the greatest luxuriance, and that the sturdy farmers with happy homes have taken the place of the wandering red men. In our own State this increase of moisture has been noticed, and the old settlers do not hesitate to say that in many places the streams have increased more than one-fourth in size during the past five years, and in some places where there was no water then there are now small but constantly running streams.

The Legislature of Wisconsin has appealed to Congress to exempt that State next year from the provisions of the general law providing for the election of Congressmen on the second Tuesday of October, as under the State constitution the election of State officers takes place in November, and it cannot be legally changed in season.

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